

Irresponsible Utterances

Sir,—Such utterances, as made by Mr. Baldev Tayal (The 'Tribune', 16 September, 1981), that Hindus are a minority in the country are absurd and contrary to facts. And to say that they (Hindus) are not safe in a country, over which, on account of their absolute majority, they are ruling, is ridiculous.

On the other hand, it is true, that it is the real minorities in India which are not safe. The attacks on *Akali Patrika* and *Ajit*, two of the Punjabi dailies of Jullundur being run by a minority community, by Hindus remind one of the latter's vandalism and maltreatment of the minorities in the various parts of India, e.g. in Aligarh, Jamshedpur, and Moradabad. Killing of Sikhs at Amritsar, Delhi, and Kanpur and the massacre

of the Sikh truck-drivers in Bihar are some of the instances of high-handedness on the part of the majority community. This goes to show that it is the life and property of the minorities that are not safe and need protection.

About 100 lathi-wielding Hindu youths, preceding the *arthi* of Lala Jagat Narain, abused Sikhs in general and the Akalis in particular. I feel, they, thus, violated solemnity of the occasion, and were not showing respect to the departed soul. What has Mr. Tayal got to say about this?

I only wish that our political leaders behave like responsible persons and abstain from making irresponsible statements.

—Lt. Col. Gulcharan Singh
Jullundur City (Retd.)

An Imprudent Attempt

Sir,—The hijacking of IA Boeing on 29th September to Lahore with 117 innocent passengers and crew by the commandos of the so-called Dal Khalsa protagonists is an imprudent, retrograde and counterproductive attempt worked up under emotional insanity and thus, merits condemnation by one and all responsible quarters. The involvement of Kirpan, so sacred to us all, in this hapless episode is also unfortunate and unwise. This is giving a handle to the opposition to whip up hate wave to becloud even just causes of Sikhs.

Sant Bhindranwala is not the killer of Lala Jagat Narain and, thus he cannot be straightaway punished or hanged. Why stupidly add to establish his implication in the alleged crime? Time is not far off when Sant Bhindranwala's meteoric catapulting into popularity because of this episode, will end in odious propaganda by the very same persons who sing his praise now.

The promoters of the Khalistan stance, from which all the top leadership of the Sikh community has disassociated themselves, are advised to define topography of their cherished kingdom. Do they mean that the present inseparable Punjabi Hindus be torn away from the few districts of the thrice-truncated residue Punjab and, in return, earn kicks for all the Sikhs residing in other states of the Indian Union?

The Government, on its part, should end frustration of Sikhs without oppression and the sense of vendetta.

Simultaneously, the Sikh community, as a whole, can very well have a thoughtful appraisal

of the situation and eschew all provocations, especially outside Punjab, which may lead to bad blood with one's own neighbour or other part, motivated interests to weaken their strength. Their hard-earned all-round progress is already a cause of jealousy among elements wishing ill of the Sikh community.

—Gyani Brahma Singh
Ajmer (Rajasthan)

Conversion to Islam

Sir, Lot of dust is being raised on conversion to Islam. But the funniest part of the story is that all Hindus and all Government officials are saying that Hindus are being converted. Actually Shudras are being converted and Shudras are not Hindus. To prove this a number of proofs can be cited but herebelow I give only three: 1. Shudras cannot enter Hindu Temples; 2. they cannot draw water from the well where from high caste Hindus draw water; 3. they cannot read Hindu religious books.

Mannu, the Law giver, was so vehement on this point that he wrote "If a Shudra per chance hears a Vedic hymn, he should be caught and molten lead be put in both of his ears".

The Hindus who are raising hue and cry on conversion, have actually no sympathy with the unfortunate people, but they want to keep them under their thumb to be used serfs and slaves. And above all, they want their votes at the time of elections.

Mahatma Gandhi tried a little to better the lot of this unfortunate class of society by giving them a pompous name, Harijans i.e. Children of God.

But this is also on record that when Dr. Ambedkar had chosen to embrace Sikhism

along with his 1300 followers, Mahatma Ji flared up and shouted: "Let them embrace Islam but not Sikhism!" So now his words are coming true? Why crib now?

—Amolak Singh
Chandigarh

Phulkari display In Switzerland

Phulkari—traditional art of embroidery of Punjab—will be on display for the first time in Bulgaria and Switzerland.

Women in the State have been using this folk art for centuries to embroider flowery patterns in bright and contrasting colours on shawls and bedsheets. Now, artists have also started using Phulkari for paintings and interior decorations.



Sardar Satnam Singh Hitkari, retired Commissioner of Income Tax, left New Delhi this week on a tour of these countries to hold Phulkari exhibitions there, besides delivering lectures on the art and culture of Punjab.

He is the first person to be invited by these countries to introduce this folk art of Punjab. He had earlier held Phulkari exhibitions in Delhi and Chandigarh.

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